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TO: OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR S/P

FROM: NEA - Mr. Byroade

SUBJECT: JCS Study of Middle East Defense.

Discussion:

You will recall that on August 18, 1952, we addressed a letter to the Secretary of Defense asking that a study be made of the problems involved in effecting a forward defense of the Middle East, giving attention to such matters as force requirements and costs. This study is basic to two projects of immediate importance: a. the support of administrative proposals for 1954 MSA legislation, and b. the study of the use of U.S. resources being conducted in NSC 135.

As to the position with respect to our legislative program, on October 8, 1952, the Department submitted to the Director for Mutual Security, a proposal that $50 - $100 million be provided for military programs to states of the Middle East other than Greece, Turkey and Iran which were separately provided for. On the basis of information which had reached us that the strategic study requested of Defense would be available before this date, we informed the Director for Mutual Security that the detailed justification for this proposal would be provided by November 1.

The Middle East section of the NSC paper has now gone through two drafts. The first draft presented only the vaguest generalizations about the problem of securing the Middle East militarily, and was generally agreed to by officers of the Joint Staff. In an effort to provoke from Defense a specific program, we did a redraft of this section based largely on British strategic concepts for the area. This the Joint Staff felt unable to consider, in the absence of authoritative guidance. They asked that the earlier generalized draft be re-incorporated in the Section, pending the completion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff study.

We now learn informally from Admiral Paige Smith that it is unlikely that the study will be completed before January. According to Admiral Smith, the Joint Chiefs are now involved in a fundamental

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reexamination [illegible]ategic concepts in connection with planning for 1956 and [illegible] feel that they can cope effectively with the broad problem [illegible] in the Department's request concerning the Middle East until this basic study has been completed. Consequently, although according to our information a substantial amount of staff work was done on the Middle East strategic study, the Chiefs decided to shelve the whole project for the time being.

This schedule obviously leaves us in an impossible situation with respect to both projects.

The MSA matter might be taken care of if the Joint Chiefs were willing to endorse the $50 - $100 million program in general terms, and based on general considerations, in advance of the completion of their strategic study. This presumably could be done on the basis of the importance of the area, MEDO prospects, and some rough assumptions about what might be done in two or three countries, e.g., Egypt, Iraq and possibly Pakistan. Both Admiral Smith and General Olmstead felt this might be adequate for legislative purposes and that the Chiefs might agree to do it.

This will not suffice, however, for the NSC paper. If there were no urgency and it were possible to arrange events in an orderly progression, it would obviously be preferable to let the Middle East study wait upon the completion of the basic study, drafting the NSC paper after both had been finished. This would probably defer the NSC paper until around the end of the first quarter of 1953. The alternative is to press for the early completion of the study. Even a tentative study, subject to further revision, would be useful provided it enabled us to sketch the general dimensions of a program and to estimate its cost. It might well be that the staff study already completed might serve for this purpose.

Recommendation:

That you discuss the above problem with the Joint Chiefs and seek to secure their agreement to a course of action which will permit us to support the MSA proposal for military aid to the Middle East, and to continue with meaningful work on NSC 135. For both purposes, it would be desirable to have promptly the full strategic study of the Middle East. Failing this, the expedients outlined above might be made to serve.

Concurrences:

S/P and S/MSA concur.

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